

# Senate votes today on extending ERA ratification date

A final Senate vote on extending the deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment is expected today with both sides predicting its passage.

In a key vote Wednesday, senators rejected 54 to 44 an amendment by Sen. Jake Garn, R-Utah, the opposition leader, which would have allowed states who have ratified the ERA to rescind their action.

Nebraska senators, Carl Curtis and Edward Zorinsky supported the Garn amendment.

The Garn amendment would have applied only to reversal actions taken after the extension period begins and would not have applied to the rescissions already made by four states, including Nebraska.

Gara conceded victory to the supporters of the bill after the Wednesday vote.

"It is quite clear to me that the opponents have the votes to pass the extension," Garn told the Associated Press.

Sen. Birch Bayh, D-Ind., principal extension sponsor predicts the measure would pass by a comfortable margin and expressed relief that the Garn amendment had been defeated.

He said the passage of Garn's proposal "would have effectively killed any chance for final ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment," according to the AP. Senate approval of rescission could have provided an obstacle in conference between the House and the Senate.

In August, the House passed a measure extending

the ERA ratification deadline from March 1979 to June 30, 1982.

If the extension is approved by Congress, it will be the first such measure ever passed.

The Senate had earlier rejected attempts by Sen. William Scott, R-Va., and by Sen. Adlai Stevenson, D-Ill., to attach rescission measures to the bill.

If the bill is passed by the Senate it must then go to a conference committee between the Senate and the House to work out any differences.

A conference committee report must then be approved by both bodies before the Congress adjourns in mid-October, leaving open the possibility of a filibuster by Senate opponents after the bill comes back from conference.

The ERA was approved by Congress in 1972 and needed the ratification of 38 states to become part of the Constitution.


Thirty-five states have ratified the measure with four having voted to rescind their approval.

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